

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 28

INTRODUCED BY R. LAIBLE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA ENCOURAGING COUNTY PLANNERS OR THEIR EQUIVALENT TO DEVELOP CONSENSUS POTENTIAL LEGISLATION FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 58TH LEGISLATURE THAT ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR COUNTIES TO IDENTIFY WILDLAND-RESIDENTIAL INTERFACE AREAS AND TO ADOPT ORDINANCES TO ADDRESS THESE AREAS; AND ENCOURAGING FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES TO MANAGE VEGETATION ON LAND UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION TO REDUCE THE RISK OF STAND-REPLACING FIRES.

WHEREAS, the State of Montana recognizes that a large number of residents are living in wildland-residential interface areas and that the number is increasing yearly; and

WHEREAS, the cost of protecting these homes and other structures against wildfire reached staggering proportions during the fires of 2000; and

WHEREAS, the state also recognizes the responsibility of private landowners in wildland-residential interface areas to build structures and manage vegetation to reduce the risk posed by wildfire to their property, their neighbor's property, and the firefighters defending or protecting their property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislature encourage county planners or their equivalent to develop consensus potential legislation for introduction in the 58th Legislature that addresses the need for counties to:

(1) identify wildland-residential interface areas; and

(2) develop and adopt ordinances addressing wildland-residential interface areas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature encourage federal land management agencies, such as the USDA Forest Service and the USDI Bureau of Land Management, to manage vegetation on the lands under their jurisdiction in wildland-residential interface areas to reduce the risk of stand-replacing wildfires moving from federal lands to adjacent land of other ownership.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all counties in Montana that have wildland-residential interface

1 areas be encouraged to develop potential legislation for introduction in the 58th Legislature regarding the  
2 adoption of ordinances pursuant to the subdivision regulations in Title 76, chapter 3, MCA, that:

3 (1) manage the subdivision and development of lands in wildland-residential interface areas by  
4 designating specific types of home construction and landscaping;

5 (2) provide all landowners within wildland-residential interface areas with development criteria that  
6 would:

7 (a) specify a vegetation management plan:

8 (i) with a primary emphasis on fuel reduction and management and how these emphasis areas will  
9 be protected in the case of wildfire; and

10 (ii) that includes specific, quantifiable standards, such as crown spacing, basal area, and dead fuel  
11 load per acre;

12 (b) identify other impacts to be considered, such as wildlife habitat concerns and screening  
13 requirements; and

14 (c) require that vegetation plans be approved by a state forester's representative, the state  
15 extension forester, the county fire warden, or other trained persons designated by the County  
16 Commissioners; and

17 (3) provide guidelines for materials and design criteria that would be applicable within the  
18 wildland-residential interface areas.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to each  
20 county in Montana.

21 - END -